

Amendments to the Claims:

The following claims will replace all prior versions of the claims in this application (in the unlikely event that no claims follow herein, the previously pending claims will remain):

1. (Original) Process for the preparation of a L-3,4-dihydroxyphenylalanine, wherein L-3,4-dihydroxyphenylalanine is produced in a fermentation medium by aerobic fermentation of a recombinant microorganism having L-tyrosine-3-hydroxy-mono-oxygenase activity and having at least the abilities to convert glucose or another carbon source into phosphoenol pyruvate (PEP) and into erythrose 4-phosphate (E4P), and to convert the PEP and E4P into L-phenylalanine, L-tyrosine and L-tryptophan, wherein the process comprises
 - (i) a growth phase and a production phase, wherein L-3,4-dihydroxy-phenylalanine is produced in the fermentation medium and
 - (ii) a downstream processing phase,characterized in that the L-3,4-dihydroxy-phenylalanine is produced from a carbon source and in that at least part of the production phase and/or downstream processing phase the pH is the range of from 1 to 7.
2. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein in the downstream processing phase the L-3,4-dihydroxy-phenylalanine produced is extracted from the fermentation medium and reextracted into a reextraction mixture.
3. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 1 ~~or claim 2, characterized in that~~ wherein the pH of the fermentation medium comprising L-3,4-dihydroxy-phenylalanine and/or the pH of the reextraction mixture comprising L-3,4-dihydroxy-phenylalanine is in the range from 1 to 7 during the entire production phase of the fermentation and/or during the entire downstream processing phase.

4. (Currently Amended) Process according to ~~any of claims 1-3~~ claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein L-3,4-dihydroxy-phenylalanine is recovered from the fermentation medium by adsorption resins with a hydrophobic interactive surface and by subsequent elution of the bound L-3,4-dihydroxy-phenylalanine from the resins with a reextraction mixture.
5. (Currently Amended) Process according to ~~any of claims 1-4~~ claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein L-3,4-dihydroxy-phenylalanine is extracted from the fermentation medium by in situ product recovery.
6. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 5, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein in situ product recovery comprises the steps of pumping the fermentation medium comprising L-3,4-dihydroxy-phenylalanine and the cells of the microorganism over a filter to separate the cells from the fermentation medium, extracting L-3,4-dihydroxy-phenylalanine from the fermentation medium by reactive extraction and transferring L-3,4-dihydroxy-phenylalanine into the reextraction mixture by reextraction, and recycling of the cells and remaining fermentation medium to the fermentation.
7. (Currently Amended) Process according to ~~any of claims 1-6~~ claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the recombinant microorganism expresses, preferably overexpresses, a 4-hydroxyphenylacetate 3-hydroxylase.
8. (Currently Amended) Process according to ~~any of claims 1-7~~ claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the recombinant microorganism also expresses, preferably overexpresses a gene encoding a FADH₂-NAD-oxidoreductase.
9. (Currently Amended) Process according to ~~any of claims 1-8~~ claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the carbon source is glucose.

10. (Currently Amended) Process according to ~~any of claims 1-9~~ claim 1,
~~characterized in that~~ wherein the microorganism is Escherichia coli
W3110/pACYCtac aroF^{FBR} tyrA/ pJF119EH hpaBhpaC.